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Character development in the novels of Evelyn Waugh

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by

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Introduction

When asked if his works were satiric, Evelyn Waugh promptly replied, "No. Satire is a matter of period. It flourishes in a stable society and pre-supposes homogeneous moral standards--the early Roman Empire and 18th-Century Europe. It is aimed at inconsistency and hypocrisy. It exposes polite cruelty and folly by exaggerating them. All this has no place in the Century of the Common Man where vice no longer pays lip service to virtue."[1] In spite of his ardent denial, Waugh was a highly articulate satirist. Referring to Waugh's comment, Paul Doyle has noted that "in its way this is Waugh's most satiric utterance and is just about the most genuinely telling and meaningful satiric attack upon contemporary manners and existence that could be stated."[2]

Born into a peaceful world in 1903, Waugh, like many of his contemporaries, became highly disillusioned with the death and destruction caused by the rapidly-moving, war-oriented society that was becoming predominant. Robert Davis quotes Waugh as saying, "The artist's only service to the disintegrated society of today is to create little independent systems of order of his own."[3] This was what Waugh did in his creation of the Mayfair society of his early novels. Peter Hinchcliffe points out:

> Waugh sees the world of the "so-called twentieth century" as a place of anarchy and unreason where the good and the innocent are victimized. He describes it in comic terms because that is his

> bent, but his novels are filled with death and madness and the breakdown of social institutions. These are the major themes that are repeated and reworked in his novels.[4]

Waugh's tone did not remain comic, however. His first three novels--Decline and Fall (1928), Vile Bodies (1930), and A Handful of Dust (1934)--were brilliant and hilarious, but with the publication of Brideshead Revisited in 1945 a sentimentalism could be seen creeping over his characters and plot. Even Tony Last, the major character in A Handful of Dust, exhibited some of the romanticized qualities that Waugh was to stress in his later character creations.

In 1962, near the end of his writing career, Waugh noted that he saw writing "not as an investigation of character, but as an exercise in the use of language."[5] Robert Davis in his article "Evelyn Waugh on the Art of Fiction" also quotes Waugh as saying,

> "All fictional characters are flat. A writer can give the illusion of depth by giving an apparently stereoscopic view of a character--seeing him from two vantage points; all a writer can do is give more or less information of a different order."[6]

In spite of this comment, Waugh's characters do not remain flat. The majority of his early characters are quite clearly one-dimensional, but with Tony Last in A Handful of Dust there is an initial movement toward the inner person, and by the time Charles Ryder is created in Brideshead Revisited there is a sentimentalism present which draws away from the flat image found originally in Paul Pennyfeather of Decline and

Fall. The purpose of this paper will be to trace this movement of characterization through the first four novels, The Loved One, a later satiric treatment of Hollywood's Forest Lawn Cemetery, and The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold, a somewhat autobiographical account which includes "A Portrait of the Writer in Middle Age."

In Decline and Fall, Paul Pennyfeather, the first of Waugh's ingenu characters, is sent down from Scone College for "indecent behavior"--he was deprived of his trousers by a drunken group of alumni and was unable to pay the fine--and becomes a schoolmaster. ("That's what most of the gentlemen does . . . that gets sent down for indecent behavior.") At Llanabba Castle he becomes attracted to the beautiful aristocratic mother of one of his students, Margot Beste-Chetwynde, and becomes her lover. On the eve of their marriage Margot sends Paul to Marseilles to "rescue her protegees" from legal problems. This "Lady of beauty, rank and stainless reputation" operates prostitution houses in South America, and unknowingly Paul has become involved. So Paul is sent to prison for white-slave traffic. When Paul is visited in prison by Margot's son he is approached with the statement, "She rather feels the whole thing's her fault, really, and short of going to prison herself, she'll do anything to help. You can't imagine Mamma in prison, can you?"[7]

Paul is eventually rescued by Margot, who has since married, through a fake death from appendicitis. He returns

to Scone College under the guise of his cousin and resumes his preparation for the ministry. Carens says, "He dies, he reappears, but he is not reborn. Nothing that has happened has had any effect upon him."[8]

Continuing with many of the same characters, Waugh produced Vile Bodies which deals with the frolicking of the Bright Young People. Adam Fenwick-Symes and his fiancée Nina Blount ride through the book partially innocent and partially aware. At one point Adam tells Nina of the futility of it all:

> . . . Masked parties, Savage parties, Victorian parties, Greek parties, Wild West parties, Russian parties, Circus parties, parties where one had to dress as somebody else, almost naked parties in St. John's Wood, parties in flats and studios and houses and ships and hotels and night clubs, in windmills and swimming baths, tea parties at school where one ate muffins and meringues and tinned crab, parties at Oxford where one drank brown sherry and smoked Turkish cigarettes, dull dances in London and comic dances in Scotland and disgusting dances in Paris--all that succession and repetition of massed humanity. . . . Those vile bodies . . .[9]

To offset the exploits of the Bright Young People, the decay of political and religious life is also illustrated with the plots of Lord Outrage and Mrs. Melrose Ape, an American evangelist with her "angels"--Faith, Charity, Chastity, Humility, Prudence, Divine Discontent, Mercy, Justice, and Creative Endeavor.

Waugh concludes this world of "vile bodies" with Adam selling Nina to their friend Ginger so he can pay off a hotel bill. Ginger is drafted, however, after his marriage to Nina,

so Adam accompanies Nina as her husband to spend Christmas with Colonel Blount, Nina's father. The final scene finds Adam alone "in the biggest battlefield in the history of the world" reading a letter from Nina who is back with her husband but carrying Adam's child. She reassures him that "Ginger has quite made up his mind that it's his, and is as pleased as anything, so that's all right. He's quite forgiven you about last Christmas, and says anyway you're doing your bit now, and in war time one lets bygones be bygones."[10]

The inadequacies of male-female relationships are shown in even greater decay in A Handful of Dust. Tony Last, whose very name symbolizes "the ultimate survivor of a former age and scheme of values, whom nobody understands, least of all his wife, Brenda,"[11] is deeply committed to preserving Hetton Abbey, his Gothic mansion. Because of the monetary problems of maintaining the servants and the house, Brenda complains, "Tony and I have to fuss about whether it's cheaper to take a car up to London for the night or buy an excursion ticket."[12] All this Brenda finds quite boring, and after seven years of marriage she begins an affair with John Beaver whom she recognizes as "second rate and a snob and, I should think, as cold as a fish . . . he's got to be taught a whole lot of things. That's part of his attraction."[13]

Brenda moves to a flat in London on the pretense of studying economics, and after the death of their son, John Andrew, through a hunting accident, she asks Tony for a

divorce, which is totally incomprehensible for him. "It was several days before Tony fully realized what it meant. He had got into a habit of loving and trusting Brenda."[14]

Faced with selling Hetton Abbey to "buy Beaver for Brenda," Tony deserts England to search for the past in the jungles of South America. Escaping from the clutches of English society, he is captured by Mr. Todd, a missionary's son who had never been out of the Amazons. Mr. Todd forces him to live out his life, reading from his collection of Charles Dickens. Ironically, Tony is held by Mr. Todd's fascination for the stories of Dickens which deal with the very era Tony had idolized.

In A Little Learning, the first and only volume to be completed of Waugh's autobiography, he wrote that "if there is one characteristic common to all my father's family, it is the habit of setting up house and staying there. I have inherited this propensity."[15] The effects of this feeling were obvious in A Handful of Dust with Tony's refusal to give up Hetton. For Waugh the aristocratic tradition was a tie with a more pleasant past. This attitude could be felt even more strongly in Brideshead Revisited.

In Brideshead the past took the form of the stability Waugh came to find in the Catholic religion. The book opened with Charles Ryder's coincidental return to Brideshead, an aristocratic family home, while serving in the war. The mansion had been all but destroyed by war, and through flashback

Ryder recalled all his past associations with the home and its Catholic inhabitants, the Marchmains.

During his Oxford days Ryder had become good friends with Sebastian, the younger son in the home. He visited Brideshead with Sebastian, and eventually came to know the whole family: Lady Marchmain, who Cordelia noted was so good that people hated her when they couldn't hate God; Julia, who betrayed her religion to marry and to "live in sin"; Brideshead, Sebastian's older brother who contemplated being a priest but never got around to it; Cordelia, the little sister who was also a fervent Catholic and dedicated her life to aiding others; and finally, Lord Marchmain who had left his righteous wife because of his deep hate for all she represented. Through the years Ryder came to see the Marchmains as all the possibilities of the Catholic faith and became aware of the strength the church held for them.

Because of his deep resentment of his mother's faith, Sebastian became a dipsomaniac, but in the end he found his final shelter with a monastery where, Cordelia noted, "One morning, after one of his drinking bouts, he'll be picked up at the gate dying, and show by a mere flicker of the eyelid that he is conscious when they give him his last sacraments."[16] Julia, who had strayed from the church for so long, gave up her life with Ryder because "it may be a private bargain between me and God, that if I give up this one thing I want so much, however bad I am, He won't despair of

me in the end."[17] Even Lord Marchmain, who despised the church so much that he exiled himself from his entire family, gave in to its force in the end. On his deathbed he made the sign of the cross as the priest gave him last rites.

Through these incidents Ryder himself lost the agnosticism he had felt so deeply and discovered the church to be a source of continuity with the past which had been lost in the war-torn world. In revisiting the chapel of the home during war years, Ryder found "a small red flame" still burning:

> The flame which the old knights saw from their tombs, which they saw put out; that flame burns again for other soldiers, far from home, farther, in heart, than Acre or Jerusalem. It could not have been lit but for the builders and the tragedians, and there I found it this morning, burning anew among old stones.[18]

From this somber mood, Waugh moves again to the lighter satire of his earlier years. After a visit to Hollywood, Waugh wrote The Loved One (1948), a spoof on Forest Lawn Cemetery, which in the book becomes Whispering Glades.

Aimée Thanatogenos is a cosmetician at Whispering Glades for whom Mr. Joyboy, the chief embalmer, makes all his corpses smile. Because of her excellency of work, Aimée has been recommended to become the first female embalmer at Whispering Glades. She is overjoyed because she is so deeply committed to the purpose of Whispering Glades. ("'To make it rich to die' and 'to cease upon the midnight with no pain.' That's exactly what Whispering Glades exists for. . . . This is my

true home," she tells Dennis.)[19]

Dennis Barlow, an employee of Happier Hunting Grounds (a mortuary for animals which reaches the same degree of grotesqueness found at Whispering Glades) proposes Aimée marry him now that she can support him, and she is shocked. "Torn between Dennis (who makes 'unethical' appeals) and the Mom-dominated Joyboy,"[20] Aimée seeks advice from her Guru, an alcoholic Mr. Slump who writes a newspaper column. He advises her to "go take a high jump."

"Attic voices prompted Aimée to a higher destiny,"[21] and so she enters Mr. Joyboy's workroom and injects herself with strychnine.

The following day Mr. Joyboy comes pleading for help to Dennis, who agrees to cremate Aimée in the Happier Hunting Grounds furnaces and then leave the country on the pretense that he had eloped with her, never to be heard of again. All this is for a fee, of course.

Completely unconcerned he reminds Joyboy, "I resign all rights in the girl. <u>You</u> are in possession of the corpse of <u>your</u> fiancée and <u>your</u> career is threatened."[22]

After starting the furnace Dennis arranges it so that "tomorrow and on every anniversary as long as the Happier Hunting Ground existed a postcard would go to Mr. Joyboy: <u>Your little Aimée is wagging her tail in heaven tonight, thinking of you</u>,"[23] this being one of the little extras that Happier Hunting Ground offered its customers. He then "picked

up the novel . . . and settled down to await his loved one's final combustion."[24]

The final book to be dealt with in this paper is The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold, a somewhat autobiographical account of Waugh. The novel deals with a voyage taken by a middle-aged novelist to Ceylon for his health. Throughout the novel he is annoyed by voices and hallucinations which are caused by a combination of two sleeping draughts in his system. The voices threaten him and even suggest he form a sexual liaison with a young girl on board the ship. Little, if any, humor is to be found in this exchange of dialogue within Pinfold's mind.

After an urgent plea from his wife to return home, he finally drives off the voices through the revelation that they are imaginary:

> He knew . . . that he had endured a great ordeal and, unaided, had emerged the victor. There was a triumph to be celebrated, even if a mocking slave stood always beside him in his chariot reminding him of mortality.[25]

It is from these novels that Waugh's techniques of characterization will be traced. Four main approaches will be recognized and discussed:

1. The utilization of the caricature;
2. The utilization of voices in the background;
3. The utilization of the ingenu and the sophisticate; and
4. The utilization of the static and the dynamic character.

Character Development in Literature

In A Little Learning, Waugh wrote: "The novelist does not come to his desk devoid of experience and memory. His raw material is compounded of all he has seen and done."[26] He was referring here to the development of characters, and his implication seemed to be that many similarities in his novels to his own past experiences are subconscious ones which the writer has long buried. John Galsworthy dealt with creativity in his book The Creation of Character in Literature:

> What we know as the creative gift in literature, or indeed in any art, is a more than normal power in certain people for dipping into the storehouse and fishing up the odds and ends of experience, together with a special aptitude for welding or grouping those odds and ends when they are fished up.[27]

Later he referred more specifically to the development of character:

> There is no rule . . . the process of character creation varies not only from novelist to novelist, but even within himself. The nearest approach to a common formula may be attained in some such words as these: a real incident, or person, impinges sharply on a receptive mood of a novelist's particular nature or temperament; the thing observed and the mood of the observer click, as it were, like two cells clinging together to form the germ-point of creation. To this germ-point are attracted suitable impacts or impressions that have been stored in the sub-conscious mind, till the germ swells to proportions which demand the relief of the expression, and in written words the novelist proceeds to free himself.[28]

Having defined the process of creativity, it is important to also identify the techniques of character development in

fiction. Characterization is the process of creating a believable character who, through a series of incidents and dialogue, plays an important role in the story. Christopher Gillie notes:

> The art of characterisation arises from the sense that at any time between birth and death human experience is confronted by what it feels to be not merely strange but implicitly dangerous, not to say hostile. From this confrontation issues growth and identity, and the two combine to form character--both the existence of it in the experience and his awareness of it in others.[29]

Aristotle defined characterization as secondary to action, or plot. Walcutt in Man's Changing Mask quotes from the Bywater translation of Aristotle:

> "Tragedy is essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life, of happiness or misery. All human happiness or misery takes the form of action; the end for which we live is a certain kind of activity, not a quality. . . . In a play . . . they do not act in order to portray the characters, they include the characters for the sake of action."[30]

Early prose tales were filled with one-dimensional characters whose existence served only to make some moral point in the action of the story. Everyman was probably the most obvious example of this type of characterization.

Not all characters were the victims of action, however. Walcutt argues that with the recognition of the concept of the tragic flaw, "Shakespeare's major tragic heroes have been summed up as men of heroic stature who are destroyed by events which are set in motion by such flaws."[31] It was no longer the action which predominated. The character had come to the forefront.

With the development of the novel in the eighteenth century this concept became even more predominant. Whereas drama relies almost entirely on action to develop its characters, the novel relies on the point of view. Much of the success of characterization in the novel depends on the personality of the narrator or personae.

In the twentieth century, writers have found the inner feelings of the protagonist of tremendous importance. This can be seen particularly in the novels of Henry James, as well as in the stream of consciousness novels of James Joyce (Ulysses) and William Faulkner (The Sound and the Fury).

Mary McCarthy deals with the use of stream of consciousness in On the Contrary. She concludes that it is the result of "the inability to say the appropriate thing or to feel the appropriate thing, combined with the horrible faculty of noticing."[32] She demonstrates the outcome in the person of a child:

> The only form of action open to a child is to break something or to strike someone, its mother or another child; it cannot cause things to happen in the world. This is precisely the situation of the hero in the novel of sensation; violence becomes a substitute for action. In the novel of sensibility, nothing happens; as people complain, there is no plot.[33]

She goes on:

> One way, however, remains open to the novelist who is interested in character (which means in human society)--a curious back door. That is the entry found by Joyce in Ulysses, where by a humorous stratagem character is shown, as it were, inside out, from behind the screen of consciousness. The interior monologue every human being conducts with himself, sotto voce, is used to create a dramatic portrait.[34]

Miss McCarthy makes a second point about characterization which should not be skimmed over in a paper discussing Evelyn Waugh. She contends that "real characterization . . . is seldom accomplished outside comedy or without the fixative of comedy."[35] The basis for her argument is that:

> The comic element is the incorrigible element in every human being; the capacity to learn, from experience or instruction, is what is forbidden to all comic creations and to what is comic in you and me. This capacity to learn is the prerogative of the hero or the heroine: Prince Hal as opposed to Falstaff.[36]

We may be supporting the hero or heroine, but it is in the comic characters that we can see ourselves. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that satire finds so much success in the comic.

Leonard Feinberg wrote in Introduction to Satire,

> The satirist wants his audience to make a quick judgment of his characters; simplifying--often oversimplifying--helps to achieve that effect. To create complex three-dimensional characters would interfere with the quick derision which the satirist wants to arouse on the part of the audience.[37]

This simplification of characters results in typing which is the most accepted method of satiric characterization.

Alvin B. Kernan says that "we never find characters in satire, only caricature."[38] He defines the satirist (the chief character in a satire) as being

> a blunt, honest man with no nonsense about him. This pose is established in a number of traditional ways. The satirist usually calls attention to his simple style and his preference for plain terms which express plain truth.

Also, "the pose of simplicity is frequently reinforced by references to humble but honest origins."[39]

The problems arise for the satirist when he discovers:

> Things are so bad, vice so arrant, the world so overwhelmingly wicked that even a plain man like the satirist who prefers to live in peace is forced to attack the vice of mankind.[40]

Kernan notes that the satirist and the tragic hero are similar, but where the tragic hero can "ponder and . . . change under pressure," the satirist "is not so complex." The satirist:

> sees the world as a battlefield between a definite, clearly understood good, which he represents, and an equally clear-cut evil. No ambiguities, no doubts about himself, no sense of mystery trouble him, and he retains always his monolithic certainty.[41]

Although Kernan sets up these basic characteristics of the satirist, he also recognizes that "the satirist is always an amalgamation of the basic characteristics which develop whenever satire is written and of the ethos of a particular age."[41]

This device of creating character types is thought to have been invented by Theophrastus (c. 370-286 BC) in his collection Characters. Matthew Hodgart notes that the genre was "partly a scientific attempt to understand the variety of human personality, and partly a normative description of errors in social behavior."[42] Benjamin Boyce describes

Theophrastus' technique in the following manner:

> Of varying length but all brief (averaging perhaps 300 words in a literal English translation), the characters of Theophrastus attempt to sketch the typical manifestations in human nature of some one quality of character. To the modern reader the aspects of character chosen may sometimes seem rather more psychological than moral; as a result, Theophrastus often strikes one as being merely an amused observer of men rather than a moralist or a reformer.[43]

The plan followed by Theophrastus in his sketches was to name the quality to be defined and then illustrate the type through a list of representative patterns of behavior. The picture was drawn by an impersonal observer, and Theophrastus was careful to include neither the character's thoughts nor his own. Boyce notes that "the language is simple; and almost nothing appears that could be labeled wit."[44] Some of the thirty sketches which have survived are the Flatterer, the Distrustful Man, the Unpleasant Man, the Chatterer, the Slanderer, the Newsmonger, and the Pettily Proud Man, which Boyce notes is one of the best.

> Petty Pride will seem to be a vulgar appetite for distinction; and the Pettily-proud man of a kind that when he is invited out to dine must needs find place to dine next the host; and that will take his son off to Delphi to cut his first hair. Nothing will please him but his lackey shall be a blackamoor. When he pays a pound of silver he has them pay it in new coin. He is apt, this man, if he keep a pet jackdaw, to buy a little ladder and make a little bronze shield for that jackdaw to wear while he hops up and down upon the ladder. Should he sacrifice an ox, the scalp or frontlet is nailed up, heavily garlanded, over against the entrance of his house, so that all that come in may see it is an ox he has sacrificed. When he goes in procession with the other knights, his man may take all the rest of his gear away from home for him, but he puts on the cloak and makes his round of the market-place in his spurs. Should

> his Melitean lap-dog die, he will make him a tomb and set up on it a stone to say "Branch of Melitè." Should he have cause to dedicate a bronze finger or toe in the temple of Asclepius, he is sure to polish it, wreathe it, and anoint it, every day. This man, it is plain, will contrive it with his fellow-magistrates that it be he that shall proclaim the sacrifice to the people; and providing himself a clean coat and setting a wreath on his head, will stand forth and say "The Magistrates have performed the rites of the Mild-Feast, Athenians, in honour of the Mother of the Gods; the sacrifice is propitious, and do you accept the blessing." This done he will away home and tell his wife what a great success he has had.[45]

Hodgart points out that the sketches were probably prepared for a treatise on comedy, and that they "are of the types who might easily appear in the 'New Comedy' of the day, as in the plays of Theophrastus' friend Menander." He goes on to note that "the tone" of the sketches "is urbane, not indignant; the work cannot be called a satire, but it provides a model for satirists to follow."[46]

During the Renaissance Theophrastus' book was translated, and Jean de la Bruyère (1645-1696) published his imitation of the genre in Les Charactères de Theophraste (1688). His sketches were more bitter than Theophrastus', and Hodgart writes that he "was certainly understood in his day as a serious critic of social institutions. His work is satire disguised as moral treatise and manual of conduct."[47]

Earlier the English had also begun building the prose-characters, but Hodgart writes that "they are too rigidly moral and too full of the traditional stiff attitudes of the formal satirist to make attractive reading."[48] Joseph Hall's

Characters of Virtues and Vices was published in 1608, and although it resembled Theophrastus somewhat in format, Hugh Walker notes that "Hall's habitual tone, even when he is dealing with the vices, is that of a grave moralist; he shows the spirit of a preacher rather than that of a satirist."[49] Walker notes that many of the finest sketches in the collection were those attributed to Sir Thomas Overbury: "No one has satirised better than Overbury the affectations of travellers or the emptiness of courtiers."[50]

A third important seventeenth-century creator of the character was John Earle (1601-1665), whom Walker calls "the prince of all character writers." In his Microcosmography (1628) he "achieves his greatest triumph in praise rather than in censure." Walker compares his creation with that of Overbury: "Like Overbury, too, he could be pungent, and with still greater effect; for he is almost wholly free from the taint of artificiality and affectation which sometimes mars Overbury."[51]

Addison and Steele provide the last example of the use of the character:

> In the Tatler and Spectator they used the 'character' as part of their programme for educating the public by very mild satire of social absurdities. . . . The strength of Addison is that he is a very close observer of London life, and has a wonderful ear for contemporary speech.[52]

Hodgart sums up the use of the character in literature in the following manner:

> The 'character' appears and flourishes in two successive centuries in which writers were fascinated by the problems of moral behavior, and when literary circles stressed the didactic function of art. . . . The 'character' declines when people become less interested in the norms of social behavior and in social types as deviants from these norms, and more interested in the peculiarities of the unique living individual. This shift of interest began in the second half of the eighteenth century.[53]

Just as the 'character' was losing its foothold, the novel was coming into its own in the world of literature. Satire found a mode of expression in the novel also, and two basic types of characterization were developed: the Cervantic tradition and the use of the picaro.

Hodgart defines the Cervantic tradition in the following manner:

> The hero should in some respects be a simpleton or a monomaniac who fails to come to grips with reality and suffers accordingly; but also that he should be spiritually superior to the rest of the world. The people who understand and can handle reality successfully are seen to be knaves, otherwise they would not be masters of this wicked world: the sacred fool cannot cope with the simplest demands of reality, but so much the worse for a world that favours deceit and chicanery.[54]

This Don Quixote figure could be seen appearing again and again in the eighteenth-century novels of Fielding, Goldsmith, and Smollett. Hodgart notes that "the finest flower of the tradition is Dickens' Mr. Pickwick, a wholly good man in a fairly wicked world of politicians, snobs and self seeking lawyers."[55]

The picaresque approach began somewhat earlier than the Cervantic tradition and is almost a reverse of technique. In the picaresque novel the picaro is a rogue of sorts:

> He is the outsider or misfit, a bastard or a boy too intelligent for his station in life, who can find no regular occupation or fixed place in a stratified society. He is forced to move out on the road and to keep moving both horizontally in the novel and vertically in society. He meets with as many cruel blows of fate as the Cervantic hero but he gives as good as he gets, outwitting cunning knaves by even greater cunning. He lives by his wits and just gets by when he learns the hard lessons of the world. The picaresque novelist takes an amoral cynical view of life; he is unsentimental, realistic in his description of the social scenes, and basically anti-heroic.[56]

The genre can be traced from La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes (1554), an anonymous tale, through Smollett (Roderick Random) and Fielding (Tom Jones) in the eighteenth century, and on into the nineteenth century with Mark Twain. Hodgart sees The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn as "the greatest version of the picaresque in the nineteenth century."[57]

Hodgart points out that the spoken idiom is one of the keys to success in the picaresque novel. This dialogue is not limited to the lower class, however; it can also be "the conversational style of the upper class 'barbarians.'" Evelyn Waugh is the writer Hodgart chooses as "the most elegant and lucid picaresque satirist of the twentieth century":

> Decline and Fall (1928) has not been equalled for its exquisitely distorted picture of English upper and middle-class life; but his finest picaro is Basil Seal, the Etonian adventurer who is the hero of Black Mischief and appears again in Put Out More Flags. Waugh had the perfect temperament for a picaresque satirist: he was in love with the absurdities of contemporary England, yet alienated from both the worldly and liberal values of his culture by a deep pessimism; he judged the world from the standpoint of a conservative Roman Catholic, which in his day had the effect of new and radical judgment.[58]

And so the satirist sticks with type characters in his writing. Whether it be the Theophrastian character or the picaro, the satirist has discovered that his best results come from a figure who cannot change.

Waugh's Character Development

Caricature

Evelyn Waugh used several techniques of characterization, but one of the most obvious was the caricature. Searching for an immediate reaction from their audience, most satirists utilize caricatures for quick results. Alvin B. Kernan deals with Waugh's ability to use this technique in his book, The Plot of Satire:

> The use of type characters is, of course, common in satire, for the satirist is never interested in deep explorations of human nature. . . . But what in some other satirists is an artistic device for getting dullness out into the open by disentangling it from the complexities of real character, becomes in Waugh a realism of sorts. . . . The rare occasions when there are hints that a character is feeling or thinking come as a great surprise.
>
> This all-pervasive simplicity and mindlessness is one of the principal causes of the trouble in Waugh's satiric world.[59]

Probably one of the most obvious caricatures in Waugh's novels was Paul Pennyfeather, whom Waugh provided author comment on:

> This was the Paul Pennyfeather who had been developing in the placid years which preceded this story. In fact, the whole of this book is really an account of the mysterious disappearance of Paul Pennyfeather, so that readers must not complain if the shadow which took his name does not amply fill the important part of hero for which he was originally cast. . . . From the point of view of this story, Paul's second disappearance is necessary, because, as the reader will probably have discerned already, Paul Pennyfeather would never have made a hero, and the only interest about him arises from the unusual series of events of which his shadow was witness.[60]

In his early novels Waugh seemed to concentrate mainly on the corrupt qualities of the Mayfair society which Paul became involved in. He introduced a multitude of caricatures to represent the wide range of bigotry and disillusionment present in the London society of the Thirties. There was the amoral Margot Beste-Chetwynde ("two lizard-skin feet, silk legs, chinchilla body, a tight little black hat pinned with platinum and diamonds, and the high invariable voice that may be heard in any Ritz Hotel from New York to Buda-Pesth"[61]) with her pet Negro, Chokey. "With or without her Negro, Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde was a woman of vital importance" (Decline, p. 290). Her opposite was found in Lady Circumference who Waugh admitted in A Little Learning was modeled after his best friend Hamish's mother. She was "high-tempered, possessive, jolly and erratic."[62] Lady Circumference illustrated the woman in society who put appearance before feeling. In relation to Margot's marriage to Paul, it was noted that:

> Lady Circumference for one, sighed for the early 'nineties, when Edward Prince of Wales, at the head of ton, might have given authoritative condemnation to this ostentatious second marriage.
>
> "It's maddenin' Tangent /her son/ having died just at this time," she said. "People may think that that's my reason for refusin'. I can't imagine that any one will go."
>
> "I hear your nephew Alastair Trumpington is the best man," said Lady Vanbrugh.
>
> "You seem to be as well informed as my chiropodist," said Lady Circumference with unusual felicity, and all Lowndes Square shook at her departure (Decline, p. 356).

Mayfair society was even more thoroughly scoured in Vile Bodies. Waugh creates a long list of caricatures in

this novel of confusion and disillusionment. Agatha Runcible represented the Bright Young People (a name a newspaperman had given Waugh's own crowd during the mid-1920's). In a world in which everything was "too bogus," her cry of "Faster. Faster." illustrated the movement of the bulk of young people between the wars. Miss Mouse and Miss Brown admired Agatha and all she represented: "Pit-a-pat went the heart of Miss Mouse. How she longed to tear down her dazzling frock to her hips and dance like a Bacchante before them all. One day she would surprise them all, thought Miss Mouse,"[63] which she does by becoming part of the Maharajah of Pukkapore's harem.

The more mature elements of the Mayfair society were represented by the masculine and opportunistic Mrs. Melrose Ape, who appeared to be modeled after Aimee Semple MacPherson, and the ineffectual Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Walter Outrage, M. P.

With Mrs. Beaver in A Handful of Dust, Waugh portrayed the parasites to be found in society. She also represented the destruction of the past with her chromium plating and natural sheepskin carpet. With her came a variety of other undesirables, such as Polly Cockpurse, the social climber who had succeeded: "Polly's party was exactly what she wished it to be, an accurate replica of all the best parties she had been to in the last year; the same band, the same supper, and above all, the same guests."[64]

Waugh's satires were filled with social caricatures such as these. He exposed them through understatement and the grotesque, and emphasized their worthlessness through dialogue, at which he was a master.

In Brideshead Revisited the shift of mood could be seen in the development of the caricatures also. Instead of representing a sterile society, his type characters became representative of either the strength of Catholicism or the disillusionment of agnosticism. Lady Marchmain and her loyal children, Brideshead and Cordelia, represented Catholicism. The reader can see their personalities only in relation to their religion.

Lady Marchmain drove her husband from her, and her son to drink because of her saintliness. Cordelia told Charles, "I sometimes think that when people wanted to hate God they hated Mummy. . . . When they want to hate Him and His saints they have to find something like themselves and pretend it's God and hate that."[65]

Brideshead represented another sort of Catholic. He was completely indoctrinated, but he was also blunt and unfeeling. When Charles told him that he reduced "what seem quite sensible propositions into stark nonsense," Bridey replied,

> "Its something in the way my mind works I suppose. I have to turn a thing round and round, like a piece of ivory in a Chinese puzzle, until--click!--it fits into place--but by that time it's upside down to everyone else. But it's the same bit of ivory, you know" (Brideshead, p. 164).

Cordelia, his sister, was also a representative of the faith, but she was of a kinder nature. Nevertheless, Charles found that she was reduced in womanhood to "an ugly woman." He reflected, "It hurt to think of Cordelia growing up quite plain; to think of all that burning love spending itself on serum injections and delousing powder" (Brideshead, p. 300).

These examples tend to indicate that Waugh disliked the effects of the Catholic faith, but such was not the case. The caricatures he drew in contrast to these serious people were even more fearful to him. He found much to concern him in the figures of Hooper and Rex Mottram.

In the youthful Hooper, to "whom one could not confidently entrust the simplest duty," Waugh saw "Young England" (Brideshead, p. 9). It was in Hooper's mouth that Waugh put the words which he saw as a threat to all that the past and the aristocracy stood for: "It doesn't seem to make any sense--one family in a place this size. What's the use of it?" (Brideshead, p. 350). It would be the Hoopers who would uproot the only salvation that Waugh saw for his world--the stability of the past to be found in the aristocracy.

Rex Mottram, whose power in politics also represented a threat, was shown by Waugh as an empty man. Julia noted, "I thought he was a sort of primitive savage, but he was something absolutely modern and up-to-date that only this ghastly age could produce. A tiny bit of a man pretending he was the whole." It is this type of man, along with the

Hoopers, who will replace the constancy found in the aristocracy. To Waugh this is disconcerting.

Voices in the Background

Although Gilbert Pinfold was a fairly well-developed character, his voices represented the caricatures present in Waugh's earlier novels. Goneril was just what her name implied, a baiting, deceitful shrew. Her husband, Angel, appeared to be another Hooper or Rex Mottram. In Margaret could be seen the trust which Waugh's characters were so often searching for, but never found. These voices seem more symbols than caricatures in The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold, but they do serve essentially the same purpose.

Although Pinfold's voices were only present in his mind, this method of characterization was not limited to The Ordeal. James Hall deals with this point in "The Other Post-War Rebellion: Evelyn Waugh Twenty-Five Years After":

> These voices have always been in Waugh's novels--accusing, defending, promising, disregarding. Many, sometimes a majority, of the characters in the comic novels do nothing except talk about the main characters. Their voices are real, but they speak for the same quiet, doubt, and concern to impress as Pinfold's unreal voices--and Pinfold at least knows they are hallucinatory. The earlier characters need these commentators, heard and unheard, to give their effects resonance, and respond to their own echoes by trying to be what others say they are.[66]

In point of fact, a short catalog of examples can help to illustrate the technique more clearly. In Decline and Fall the following "voices" are heard about Margot:

Fagan: "She is the Honourable Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde, you know--sister-in-law of Lord Pastmaster--a very wealthy woman, South American. They always say that she poisoned her husband. . . . It never came to court, but there was a great deal of talk about it at the time" (p. 291).

Mrs. Clutterbuck: "I think it's an insult bringing a nigger here . . . It's an insult to our own women" (p. 291).

Vicar: "The mistake was ever giving them their freedom. . . . They were far happier and better looked after before" (p. 294).

Flossie Fagan: "It's queer . . . that a woman with as much money as Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde should wear such dull clothes" (p. 294).

Professor Silenus: "She's /Margot/ getting old. In ten years she will be almost worn out" (p. 336).

Sir Humphrey Maltravers: "It all comes of this set she's got into. It's not doing her any good. Damned awkward position to be in--a rich woman without a husband! Bound to get herself talked about. What Margot ought to do is to marry" (p. 339).

The generation gap is illustrated through the "voices" in Vile Bodies:

Mrs. Mouse: "I'm told that they're having another of their parties . . . in an aeroplane this time" (p. 111).

Fanny: "What I always wonder, Kitty dear, is what they actually do at these parties of theirs. I mean, do they . . .?" (p. 112).

Kitty: "I doubt very much whether they really appreciate it all as much as we should . . . young people take things so much for granted" (p. 112).

Mr. Outrage: "They had a chance after the war that no generation has ever had. There was a whole civilization to be saved and remade--and all they seem to do is play the fool" (p. 113).

At Margot Metroland's party for Mrs. Ape the comments become cluttered into one long paragraph of mixed voices:

> There's Mrs. Panrast . . . yes, dear, of course you know her, she used to be Eleanor Balcairn . . . now why does Margot ask anyone like that, do you think? . . . It is not as though Margot was so innocent . . . and there's Lord Monomark . . . yes, the man who owns those amusing papers . . . they say that he and Margot, but before her marriage, of course (her second marriage, I mean), but you never know, do you, how things crop up again? . . . I wonder where Peter Pastmaster is? . . . He never stays at Margot's parties . . . he was at dinner, of course, and my dear, how he drank. . . . He can't be more than twenty-one. . . . Oh, so that is Mrs. Ape. What a coarse face . . . no dear, of course she can't hear . . . she looks like a procureuse . . . but perhaps I shouldn't say that here, should I?" (Vile Bodies, pp. 85-86).

Even the gossip columnists fill the papers with their comments on the lives of the Bright Young People and their elder counterparts:

Lord Vanburgh: "My editress said yesterday she was tired of seeing the same names over and over again--and here they are again, all of them. There's Nina Blout's engagement being broken off, but she's not got any publicity value to speak of. Agatha Runcible's usually worth a couple of paragraphs, but they're featuring her as a front-page news story tomorrow over this Custom House business."

Lord Balcairn: "I made rather a good thing over Edward Throbbing being in a log shanty in Canada which he built himself with the help of one Red Indian. I thought that was fairly good because you see I could contrast that with Miles being dressed as a Red Indian tonight, don't you think so, or don't you?" (Vile Bodies, p. 45).

In A Handful of Dust, Mrs. Beaver and her crowd provide the main thrust of comments:

Mrs. Beaver: "Everyone thought she /Brenda/ would marry Jock Grant-Menzies at one time. Wasted on Tony Last, he's a prig. I should say it was time she began to be bored" (p. 11).

Daisy: "Golly what a house" (p. 84).

Veronica: "My poor Brenda" (p. 84).

Polly: "Where's her Mr. Beaver today? . . . It's all very touching isn't it. Though I can't see his point myself . . ." (p. 119).

After John Andrew's death Polly notes:

> "That's the end of Tony so far as Brenda is concerned" (p. 123).

Allan (Brenda's brother-in-law) makes one of the few perceptive comments about Waugh's voice characters and in doing so becomes a voice himself:

> "That's always the trouble with people when they have affaires. They either think no one knows, or everybody. The truth is that a few people like Polly and Sybil make a point of finding out about everyone's private life; the rest of us just aren't interested" (p. 99).

In The Loved One only two voices seem to stand out, the Englishman, Sir Ambrose, and the Guru, Mr. Slump.

Sir Ambrose: "We limeys have a peculiar position to keep up, you know, Barlow. They may laugh at us a bit--the way we talk and the way we dress; our monocles--they may think us cliquey and stand-offish, but, by God, they respect us. . . . You never find an Englishman among the under-dogs--except in England, of course. That's understood out here, thanks to the example we've set."[67]

> "We don't want any poor Englishman hanging around Hollywood. I told him as much, frankly and fairly, as one Englishman to another" (p. 43).

> "In Africa, if a white man is disgracing himself and letting down his people the authorities pack him off home. We haven't any such rights here, unfortunately." "You know the international situation as well as I do. There are always a few politicians and journalists simply waiting for the chance to take a knock at the Old Country. A thing like this /Dennis' nonsectarian ministry/ is playing into their hands" (p. 183).

> "That is where the Cricket Club comes in. I hope the time will never come when we are not ready to help a fellow countryman in difficulties. We had a committee meeting last night and your name was mentioned. There was complete agreement. To put it in a nutshell, my boy, we will send you home" (pp. 184-85).

The Guru's comments related to Aimée:

> "The girl sounds like a prize bitch" (p. 140).
>
> "That's how women always are. . . . It just breaks their hearts to let any man go" (p. 152).
>
> "I told her to go take a high jump. . . . Wasn't I right? . . . Well, for Christ's sake, with a name like that!" (pp. 171-72).

Brideshead Revisited produced two very different "voices": Anthony Blanche and Beryl Muspratt. Both, however, provided dialogue on the Marchmains.

Anthony: "They're all charming, of course, and quite, quite gruesome" (p. 53).

> "There's Brideshead who's something archaic, out of a cave that's been sealed for centuries. He had the face as though an Aztec sculptor had attempted a portrait of Sebastian; he's a learned bigot, a ceremonious barbarian, a snowbound lama" (p. 54).
>
> Julia--"She is one thing only, Renaissance tragedy. . . . So gay, so correct, so unaffected. Dogs and children love her, other girls love her--my dear, she's a fiend--a passionless, acquisitive, intriguing ruthless killer. . . . There ought to be an Inquisition especially set up to burn her" (p. 54).
>
> "How does Lady Marchmain manage it? It is one of the questions of the age. . . . Very beautiful . . . that Reinhardt nun . . . She has convinced the world that Lord Marchmain is a monster. . . . She sucks their blood" (pp. 54-56).
>
> "And Lord Marchmain, well, a little fleshy perhaps, but very handsome, a magnifico, a voluptuary, Byronic, bored, infectiously slothful, not at all the sort of man you would expect to see easily put down. . . . He is the last, historic, authentic case of someone being hounded out of society" (pp. 54-55).

> "It is not an experience I would recommend for An Artist at the tenderest stage of his growth, to be strangled with charm."

Years later he again discussed the Marchmains with Charles:

> "I warned you. I took you out to dinner to warn you of charm. I warned you expressly and in great detail of the Flyte family. Charm is the great English blight. It does not exist outside these damp islands. It spots and kills anything it touches. It kills love; it kills art; I greatly fear, my dear Charles, it has killed you" (Brideshead, p. 273).

Beryl Muspratt was a commoner trying to work her way into an aristocratic family. Julia provided the most perceptive description of her: "You see, I imagine she's been used to bossing things rather in naval circles, with flag-lieutenants trotting round and young officers-on-the-make sucking up to her. . . . She's just a good-hearted woman who wants a good home for her children and isn't going to let anything get in her way. She's playing up the religious stuff at the moment for all it's worth. I daresay she'll ease up a bit when she's settled" (Brideshead, p. 298). The middle-class comments on the aristocracy were domineering:

> "'So you're divorcing one divorced man and marrying another. It sounds rather complicated, but my dear . . . I've usually found every Catholic family has one lapsed member, and it's often the nicest" (Brideshead, p. 297).

Lord Marchmain is indignant about her attitude:

> "A naughty old man, that's what she thought I was" (Brideshead, p. 320).

The ultimate came with Beryl's description of the audience at the Vatican:

> "Do you know, Lord Marchmain, I felt as though it was I who was leading the bride" (Brideshead, p. 320).

Beryl was another Hooper who was a deteriorating factor in a world of gentility.

Rex and his political associates also represented the destruction. Their voices did not comment on individual characters in the novel, but they provide an excellent backdrop for the climate of political feeling at the time the book was written.

The Ingenu and the Sophisticate

In a world such as this, Waugh used a third highly effective technique in developing his characters. Stephen Greenblatt points out:

> One of Waugh's favorite satiric devices is suddenly to catapult a totally naive individual into a grotesque and uncontrollable world, for, with this technique, he can expose both the corruption of society and the hopelessness of naive goodness and simple-minded humanism.[68]

James Carens also points to Waugh's usage of the ingenu:

> As have other accomplished practitioners of this mode, Waugh has seized upon the ironic manner of the ingenu satire to give the reader a means of evaluating the essential object of such satire--not the naif himself but the world which surrounds him. When their innocence becomes involved in action, the possibilities of dramatic irony are multifarious.[69]

Paul Pennyfeather was Waugh's first good example of the ingenu. When Professor Silenus told Paul of his theory of life as a big wheel in Luna Park, he pointed out:

> You're a person who was clearly meant to stay in the seats and sit still and if you get bored watch the

> others. Somehow you got onto the wheel, and you got thrown off again at once with a hard bump.[70]

Tony Last was also an innocent. Tony had lived in the same house all his life and in the same room of that house. Each year he added new mementos of his growth:

> He had taken nothing from the room since he had slept there, but every year added to its contents, so that it now formed a gallery representative of every phase of his adolescence--the framed picture of a dreadnought (a coloured supplement from Chums), all its guns spouting flame and smoke; a photographic group of his private school; a cabinet called 'the Museum,' filled with a dozen desultory collections, eggs, butterflies, fossils, coins; his parents, in a leather diptych which had stood by his bed at school; Brenda, eight years ago when he had been trying to get engaged to her; Brenda with John, taken just after the christening; an aquatint of Hetton, as it had stood until his great-grandfather demolished it; some shelves of books" (Handful of Dust, p. 17).

Everything was so simple. When Brenda asked for a divorce Tony could not even comprehend the meaning of her affair.

In The Loved One Aimée Thanatogenos could be called an innocent, although she could be classified more derogatorily as a fool. Her letters to the Guru illustrate this quality most clearly, as does her devotion to Dennis because of his poetic abilities. Discovering they were "all by other people, some by people who passed on hundreds of years ago," she is "mortified." When Dennis pretends to hold her to an oath sworn in Whispering Glades she commits suicide and her two lovers are faced with the problem of her disposal. Dennis tells Joyboy quite unconcerned, "All you have to do is collect our Loved One, if you will forgive the expression, and bring her here. Tonight after working hours will be the time"

(Loved One, p. 186).

Dennis represented the sophisticate in satiric characterizations. He approached the world around him with little concern. When his friend hung himself, Dennis accepted it:

> The spectacle had been rude and momentarily unnerving; perhaps it had left a scar somewhere out of sight in his subconscious mind. But his reason accepted the event as part of the established order. Others in gentler ages had had their lives changed by such a revelation; to Dennis it was the kind of thing to be expected in the world he knew (Loved One, p. 46).

When Sir Ambrose suggested he go home, he was not insulted. He was an opportunist who would benefit from the check offered by the Cricket Club.

Even as Aimée's body is being burned, Dennis views the situation objectively:

> On this last evening in Los Angeles Dennis knew that he was singularly privileged. The strand was littered with bones and wreckage. He was adding his bit; something that had long irked him, his young heart. He was carrying back instead a great, shapeless chunk of experience, the artist's load; bearing it home to his ancient and comfortless shore; to work on it hard and long, for God knew how long--it was the moment of vision for which a lifetime is often too short (Loved One, p. 190).

The Static and the Dynamic

Waugh's treatment of the ingenu and the sophisticate provide a transition into a fourth way of looking at his characters, the static and the dynamic. Professor Silenus told Paul Pennyfeather about the big wheel at Luna Park in Decline and Fall:

> "You pay five francs and go into a room with tiers of seats all round, and in the centre the floor is made of a great disc of polished wood that revolves quickly. At first you sit down and watch the others. They are all trying to sit in the wheel, and they keep getting flung off, and that makes them laugh and you laugh too."

He continued:

> "Lots of people just enjoy scrambling on and being whisked off and scrambling on again. How they all shriek and giggle! Then there are others, like Margot, who sit as far out as they can and hold on for dear life and enjoy that. But the whole point about the wheel is that you needn't get on it at all, if you don't want to. People get hold of ideas about life, and that makes them think they've got to join in the game, even if they don't enjoy it. It doesn't suit every one.
>
> "People don't see that when they say 'life' they mean two different things. They can mean simply existence, with its psychological implications of growth and organic change. They can't escape that--even by death, but because that's inevitable they think the other idea of life is too--the scrambling and excitement and bumps and the efforts to get to the middle."

He concluded:

> "Instead of this absurd division into sexes they ought to class people as static and dynamic. There's a real distinction there, though I can't tell you how it comes. I think we're probably two different species spiritually" (Decline, pp. 409-10).

Much of Waugh's overall character development can be viewed in terms of the static and the dynamic. In the static he sees one who can come up against the disillusionment of society without an awareness of what is happening to him. Situations occur and yet he remains the same--outside of society and unharmed by its brutal blows. His part in the story follows one big circle, and in the end we find him thinking and doing exactly the same things he was thinking

and doing in the beginning.

The dynamic character, on the other hand, is one who accepts the disillusionment necessary to conform with the distorted world. He is aware of all that goes on around him, but he is not disturbed by it. The dynamic person is not necessarily a happy person, but his life is not disrupted by pessimism either. He seems to exist in a neutrality zone which calls for the suspension of emotion. The dynamic character need not be a more complex person, he is simply more aware of what is going on around him. He perceives more than the static character, but this does not make his life any better than the static person's situation. The key point is that while the static person is incapable of change, the dynamic person changes quickly to the demands of the situation. He searches for the way to fit and then makes the necessary changes to do so.

Waugh uses both types of characters in his novels. However, there does seem to be an emphasis on the static in his early novels which fades to an emphasis on the dynamic in his later novels. Paul Pennyfeather is static. Tony Last is static also, but Tony becomes dynamic when his Hetton is threatened. Charles Ryder is dynamic, as are Dennis Barlow and Gilbert Pinfold. Much of this trend is probably due to the fact that Waugh himself was becoming more and more aware of the futility of trying to change society.

Over and over again we are reminded that Paul is static

in Decline and Fall. Professor Silenus even tells us so. James Carens notes that "he dies, he reappears, but he is not reborn. Nothing that has happened has had any effect upon him."[71] In the Epilogue the reader finds Paul in exactly the same place as he was in the Prelude. It is almost as if nothing had happened, and one could easily believe this were it not for the appearance of Peter Pastmaster, Margot's son, reminding us of all that has transpired.

Although the major character in Decline and Fall is static, Waugh also introduces the dynamic personality in the person of Grimes. In A Little Learning Waugh wrote of the model for Grimes, a second-master at Oxford during Waugh's second term:

> Grimes sought to enliven me with stories of his own ups and downs: experiences that might have been taken for hallucinations save for his shining candour. Every disgrace had fallen on this irrepressible man; at school, at the university, in the army, and later in his dedicated task as schoolmaster; disgraces such as, one was told, make a man change his name and fly the kingdom; scandals so dark that they remained secrets at the scene of his crimes. Headmasters were loath to admit that they had ever harboured such a villain and passed him on silently and swiftly. Grimes always emerged serenely triumphant.[72]

Unlike Pennyfeather, Grimes was always resourceful when it came to saving himself from discomfort. Whereas Paul would allow himself to go to prison for his fiancée, Grimes kept a fiancée dangling to save himself from similar situations.

Tony Last in A Handful of Dust begins as Paul does in Decline and Fall, but Tony balks when his one tie with the

stability of the past is threatened. Vida Markovic discusses Tony in her book The Changing Face:

> Tony himself has no personality, no individuality. Hetton represents his continuity in time. It alone lends him identity and enables him to exist. . . . In the end Tony is punished for the greatest crime one can commit against life--refusing to be. He is content to conform to out-worn patterns of conduct without asking himself what they mean, or, if suspecting they have lost their meaning, without resenting their meaninglessness.73

Tony does fail to react to what is going on around him throughout much of the book. The fact that Brenda goes off to London to study economics for days at a time does not create suspicions in him, he only becomes lonely. When Brenda writes that "you must have realized for some time that things were going wrong," he simply thought that "Brenda had lost her reason." Waugh emphasized over and over that "it was several days before Tony realized what it meant. He had got into a habit of loving and trusting Brenda" (Handful of Dust, p. 128).

Even throughout the preparations for divorce Tony seems non-existent. His entire life style is to be disrupted but still he cannot change. His single characteristic of "loving and trusting Brenda" remains intact. It is not until Hetton is threatened that he comes alive.

"'Who on earth would have expected the old boy to turn up like that?' asked Polly Cockpurse," and the reader of Waugh's satire as well. Tony was to be a static character who did not change, but suddenly he does change and react

to what's happening around him.

Waugh saw the aristocracy as one tie with the sanity of the past and through Tony Last he illustrates that he will not let it slip from his fingers. When Brenda confirmed that she knew her request for alimony meant selling Hetton, Tony's "mind had suddenly become clearer on many points that puzzled him. A whole Gothic world had come to grief . . . there was now no armour, glittering in the forest glades, no embroidered feet on the greensward; the cream and dappled unicorns had fled . . ." (Handful of Dust, p. 154).

Tony is punished in the end, but it is not because he refuses to be. He becomes aware and dynamic, but instead of staying and facing the changes necessary he runs off to find another Gothic world where problems do not exist. Tony is the transition figure in Waugh's novels to the man who is aware and who can change to work for improvement. Tony makes the initial attempt, but is not yet strong enough to complete the conversion.

In Charles Ryder we find the dynamic figure who can help point to a salvation, if a better world is not possible. Charles, who is an agnostic, watches his Catholic companions, the Marchmains, survive a multitude of crises. Once he tells Brideshead that "if I ever felt for a moment like becoming a Catholic, I should only have to talk to you for five minutes to be cured." He sees his friend Sebastian become a dipsomaniac because of his mother's purity. He sees Lord Marchmain

become an exile because of his hatred for the church and its personification in Lady Marchmain. He sees Cordelia become "an ugly woman" because of her devotion, and he even loses Julia because of her "private bargain" with God. It is a family ripped apart by its religion, and yet, in the end the family members find strength in the church. Even the bitter Lord Marchmain submits in the end:

> The hand moved slowly down his breast, then to his shoulder, and Lord Marchmain made the sign of the cross. Then I knew the sign I had asked for was not a little thing, not a passing nod of recognition, and a phrase came back to me from my childhood of the veil of the temple being rent from top to bottom (Brideshead, pp. 338-39).

Unlike Tony, Charles does not run from what he has learned. Waugh has him change and grow. He loses much of the charm Blanche had warned him of, but he does not become totally disillusioned either. Waugh still felt hope at this stage in his development, and he looked for strength in the aristocratic Catholic families such as the Marchmains. In the end Charles finds the "small red flame . . . burning anew among old stones."

Waugh has not deserted his usage of the static character, however, in this more romantic novel. Brideshead, the elder son of the Marchmain family, shows strong similarities to Pennyfeather. Waugh was attempting to illustrate the positive side of Catholicism, and although Bridey may seem somewhat brutal at times, he still has a faith that is unshakable. Throughout the novel he is the figure who represents the

highly dogmatic Catholic. He views everything in relation to the church. Even as his father is dying, Bridey converts Lord Marchmain's words about a priest into his own religious values:

> "I presume he meant what he said. He meant that he had not been accustomed regularly to receive the sacraments, and since he was not at the moment dying, he did not mean to change his ways--yet" (Brideshead, p. 328).

He cannot see things in any other way. The mental state of his brother, Sebastian, the death of his mother, and his marriage do not affect him. He remains unchanged.

With The Loved One, Waugh turned back to the satiric novels of his earlier days, and away from the more romantic style he had found in Brideshead Revisited, but he did not turn from the dynamic personality in the role of the major character. Like Charles Ryder, Dennis Barlow is a dynamic character. He changes easily to fit any situation that arises and feels no emotion. He shifts in and out of his love affair with Aimée, even to the point of unconcern as he plans to cremate her. His job situation depends on where the money is--if a non-sectarian ministry is a more profitable occupation he has no qualms about the change. He is totally unconcerned, but he is in favor of any change which will aid him in holding on to the Luna Park wheel. In the end he is pleased to recognize that he has finally rid himself of "his young heart. He was carrying back instead a great shapeless chunk of experience, the artist's load; bearing it home to

his ancient and comfortless shore; to work on it hard and long, for God knew how long--it was the moment of vision for which a lifetime is often too short" (Loved One, p. 190).

In tracing Waugh's character development, there appears to be movement from the static to the dynamic personality in the role of the major character. This is not to say that he does not include both types in each of his novels, because the static and dynamic personality can be found in all six novels used in this paper, but in general his character development has moved from the naive man drawn to form a contrast with the corrupt world to the man who is unconcerned but aware of society's faults. He still has not found a stable world. Malcolm Bradbury notes in his study of Waugh that "the courtly hero, half-Catholic, half aristocratic, stands as a vague ideal figure behind some of his later novels, but doubt, despair and anarchy are also active in this universe."[74] In Gilbert Pinfold the despair reaches its limit and comes to grips with itself. There is no answer which will save man from disillusionment--only an awareness can aid him. He cannot escape. Gilbert becomes aware of this and adjusts to life accordingly:

> He knew, and the others did not know--not even his wife, least of all his medical adviser--that he had endured a great ordeal and, unaided, had emerged the victor. There was a triumph to be celebrated, even if a mocking slave stood always beside him in his chariot reminding him of mortality.[75]

Near the end of his life, Waugh wrote in his auto-

biography:

> More than once already in the preceding pages mention has been made of the obliteration of English villages. The process is notorious and inevitable. This is part of the grim cyclorama of spoliation which surrounded all English experience in this century and any understanding of the immediate past . . . must be incomplete unless this huge deprivation of the quiet pleasures of the eye is accepted as a dominant condition, sometimes making for impotent resentment, sometimes for mere sentimental apathy, sometimes poisoning love of country and neighbours. To have been born into a world of beauty, to die amid ugliness is the common fate of all us exiles.[76]

Waugh's characters reflect this attitude, but it seems to be done more clearly in the novels before Brideshead Revisited. There is a lightness present in these early novels that redeems them for the reader. Waugh's point is clear without the heavy religious and aristocratic overtones to be found in his later novels.

James Hall discusses Waugh's movement of characters in much the same way:

> His characters do not work through their problems, even tragically, but compound their confusion. Decline and Fall shows a tentative sortie into high life and a withdrawal after finding it too tricky. Vile Bodies deals with acceptance and participation in a rebel elite which undermines itself. . . . And A Handful of Dust faces the impossibility of even embarking on such a rebellion. His characteristic conflict evolves from the power of stylized rebellion to shape the lives of people too sensitive or too hostile to live by its code.[77]

Waugh has used four methods of creating the characters in this world of disillusionment. Like most satirists, he utilizes the caricature for immediate effect. With this he provides a barrage of "voices" as a backdrop for the charac-

ters and their activities. Most of Waugh's major characters are formed as ingenus, but he does not eliminate the sophisticate as a powerful indicator of the distasteful world. Lastly, Waugh utilizes a static-dynamic relationship between his characters and their environment. Through these techniques he is able to illustrate the uselessness of a struggle for improvement. Mankind simply has to accept his world and be aware of its distortion to survive.

Waugh's themes remained much the same throughout his writing career. He sought an escape from the horrors of the modern world, and felt he had found it in Brideshead Revisited. By the time he wrote The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold the reader could see that Waugh had discovered the futility even there. William J. Cook, Jr. commented that "Waugh's fiction moves from satiric denunciation, to comic criticism, to romantic optimism, and finally, to ironic rebellion."[78] Using a variety of approaches Waugh was able to reflect his disillusionment with the twentieth-century society through the development of his characters. Thomas Staley wrote in "Waugh the Artist:"

> In A Handful of Dust Waugh's comic vision carries with it the tragic implications of a dying civilization. He felt that the church and the aristocracy with their links in history could draw men from the terrifying abuses of modern life.[79]

In Gilbert Pinfold Waugh discovers that there is no answer but in facing the situation and living with it. Waugh himself has become a dynamic character in his twentieth-century world.

Footnotes

[1] James W. Nichols, "Romantic and Realistic: The Tone of Evelyn Waugh's Early Novels," College English, 24 (1962), 46-56.

[2] Paul A. Doyle, Evelyn Waugh (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1969), p. 44.

[3] Robert Murray Davis, "Evelyn Waugh on the Art of Fiction," PLL, 2 (1966), 243-252.

[4] Peter Hinchcliffe, "Fathers and Children in the Novels of Evelyn Waugh," University of Toronto Quarterly, 35 (1966), 293-310.

[5] Davis, "Art of Fiction," p. 244.

[6] Davis, "Art of Fiction," p. 245.

[7] Evelyn Waugh, Decline and Fall (1928; rpt. New York: Dell Publ. Co., 1959), p. 366.

[8] James F. Carens, The Satiric Art of Evelyn Waugh (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1966), p. 11.

[9] Evelyn Waugh, Vile Bodies (1930; rpt. New York: Dell Publ. Co., 1960), p. 106.

[10] Waugh, Vile Bodies, p. 187.

[11] Bernard Bergonzi, "Evelyn Waugh's Gentlemen," Critical Quarterly, 5 (1963), 23-36.

[12] Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust (1934; rpt. New York: Dell Publ. Co., 1959), p. 38.

[13] Waugh, Handful of Dust, p. 53.

[14] Waugh, Handful of Dust, p. 128.

[15] Evelyn Waugh, A Little Learning: An Autobiography (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), p. 25.

[16] Evelyn Waugh, Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1945), p. 309.

[17] Waugh, Brideshead, p. 340.

[18] Waugh, Brideshead, p. 351.

[19] Evelyn Waugh, The Loved One (1948; rpt. New York: Dell Publ. Co., 1962), p. 114.

[20] Carens, The Satiric Art, p. 21.

[21] Waugh, Loved One, p. 173.

[22] Waugh, Loved One, p. 185.

[23] Waugh, Loved One, p. 190.

[24] Waugh, Loved One, p. 191.

[25] Evelyn Waugh, The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1957), p. 231.

[26] Waugh, A Little Learning, p. 196.

[27] John Galsworthy, The Creation of Characters in Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), p. 5.

[28] Galsworthy, The Creation of Characters, p. 18.

[29] Christopher Gillie, Character in English Literature (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1965), p. 24.

[30] Charles Child Walcutt, Man's Changing Mask (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn., 1966), p. 14.

[31] Walcutt, Man's Changing Mask, p. 14.

[32] Mary McCarthy, On the Contrary (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1951), p. 278.

[33] McCarthy, On the Contrary, p. 279.

[34] McCarthy, On the Contrary, p. 280.

[35] McCarthy, On the Contrary, p. 288.

[36] McCarthy, On the Contrary, p. 289.

[37] Leonard Feinberg, Introduction to Satire (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1967), p. 234.

[38] Alvin B. Kernan, The Cankered Muse (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959), p. 23.

[39] Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 16.

[40] Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 19.

[41] Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 22.

[42] Matthew Hodgart, Satire (New York: McGraw Hill, 1969), p. 163.

[43] Benjamin Boyce, The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1947), p. 4.

[44] Boyce, The Theophrastan Character, p. 6.

[45] Boyce, The Theophrastan Character, p. 6.

[46] Hodgart, Satire, p. 165.

[47] Hodgart, Satire, p. 166.

[48] Hodgart, Satire, p. 169.

[49] Hugh Walker, English Satire and Satirists (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1925), p. 111.

[50] Walker, English Satire, p. 111.

[51] Walker, English Satire, p. 112.

[52] Hodgart, Satire, p. 167.

[53] Hodgart, Satire, pp. 167-68.

[54] Hodgart, Satire, pp. 217-18.

[55] Hodgart, Satire, p. 218.

[56] Hodgart, Satire, p. 218.

[57] Hodgart, Satire, p. 220.

[58] Hodgart, Satire, pp. 220-21.

[59] Alvin B. Kernan, The Plot of Satire (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1965), p. 149.

[60] Waugh, Decline, p. 332.

[61] Waugh, Decline, p. 290. (Hereafter page numbers will appear in the text.)

[62] Waugh, A Little Learning, p. 192.

[63] Waugh, Vile Bodies, p. 47. (Hereafter page numbers will appear in the text.)

[64] Waugh, A Handful of Dust, p. 49. (Hereafter page numbers will appear in the text.)

[65] Waugh, Brideshead, p. 221. (Hereafter page numbers will appear in the text.)

[66] James Hall, "The Other Post-War Rebellion: Evelyn Waugh Twenty-Five Years After," ELH, 28 (1961), 187-202.

[67] Waugh, The Loved One, pp. 16-17. (Hereafter page numbers will appear in the text.

[68] Stephen Jay Greenblatt, Three Modern Satirists: Waugh, Orwell and Huxley (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1965), p. 8.

[69] Carens, The Satiric Art, p. 37.

[70] Waugh, Decline, p. 410.

[71] Carens, The Satiric Art, p. 11.

[72] Waugh, A Little Learning, p. 229.

[73] Vida Marković, The Changing Face (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1970), p. 77.

[74] Malcolm Bradbury, Evelyn Waugh (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1964), p. 14.

[75] Waugh, Gilbert Pinfold, p. 231.

[76] Waugh, A Little Learning, p. 33.

[77] Hall, "The Other Post-War Rebellion," p. 202.

[78] Wm. J. Cook, Jr., Masks, Modes and Morals (Cranbury, N.J.: Assoc. Univ. Presses, 1971), p. 10.

[79] Thomas F. Staley, "Waugh the Artist," Commonwealth, 84 (1966), 270-272.

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